ROCKY FLATS CLOSURE PROJECT NEWS RELEASE **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: **Karen Lutz, DOE-RFPO, 303/966-4546**
Bill Badger, Kaiser-Hill, 303/966-5754

04-13

Cleanup of Largest Source of Soil Contamination at Rocky Flats Complete

Highest risk sites addressed

GOLDEN, Colo., September 23, 2004 – Workers at Rocky Flats have removed the last of the largest source of soil contamination at Rocky Flats. Known as the Lip Area, cleanup of the 36-acre wind blown area is located on the east edge of the Industrial Area adjacent to the 903 Pad. Remediation included the removal and packaging of 97,800 tons of plutonium-contaminated soils from the pad and the Lip Area. The 3.4-acre pad was completed in Dec. 2003.

"Environmental cleanup was an enormous challenge at the start of this project." said DOE Site Manager Frazer Lockhart. "Today, with the oversight and collaboration among our regulators and communities we have removed the inherent risk to our workers and surrounding communities."

With the remediation of the 903 Lip Area, workers have completed 75 percent of the environmental sites left behind by 40 years of nuclear weapons production. These significant accomplishments are a direct result of the cooperation and teamwork between the Rocky Flats workers and the communities as they work with the lead agencies overseeing the Rocky Flats Closure Project – the Department of Energy (DOE), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE).

"By addressing the risks and partnering on the remedies, the DOE, the State of Colorado and the EPA are ensuring the long-term safety of the surrounding communities and future visitors to the Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge," said EPA Regional Administrator Robbie Roberts. "Completion of the 903 Pad area is a perfect example of the long-standing cooperation between the regulatory agencies involved in the cleanup and closure of Rocky Flats."

"Cleanup of both areas marks a major milestone for the closure of Rocky Flats," added Howard Roitman, CDPHE director of Environmental Programs. "I have visited the site many times over the years, but as I tour the site today the visible progress is truly remarkable. By addressing the areas posing the highest risk first, it is evident that the site is moving closer to the ultimate goal of eliminating environmental risk from Rocky Flats and Colorado permanently."

A major part of the work to be done to close Rocky Flats involves restoration of the environment. When cleanup of Rocky Flats commenced, the extent of environmental contamination was thoroughly investigated including groundwater, surface water, soil and air monitoring and sampling. Any area remotely suspected of being contaminated was identified as a potential cleanup site. In all, 360 potential areas of contamination were identified and 274 have been addressed. These investigations resulted in removal actions and in-place remediation of ground water.

The Rocky Flats Cleanup Agreement establishes the regulatory framework for achieving cleanup and guides the remediation of radioactive and other hazardous substance contamination at Rocky Flats.

Remaining environmental restoration projects include the original process waste lines, a storage area contaminated with carbon tetrachloride and underground fuel oil tanks. In addition, environmental covers will be installed on two former landfills and a pond containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB) and semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOC) will be remediated.

To complete closure, workers will remove all asphalt, utilities and recontour and revegetate. Final close-out sampling is required to verify that all RFCA obligations have been met. When cleanup is complete, EPA must certify the cleanup before the site can be transitioned to a National Wildlife Refuge to be managed by the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

Rocky Flats is a DOE owned cleanup and closure site operated by Kaiser-Hill Company under an accelerated closure contract. The Rocky Flats mission includes the now completed special nuclear material management and shipment, nuclear deactivation and decommissioning, waste management and shipment, environmental cleanup and site closure.

– 30 –